The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home

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CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	A Winter Prayer. Poem.	1
2.	More or Less	1
3.	A New Year	3
4.	New Year Message to Guild Members ...	3
5.	A Year's Windfalls. Poem.	5
6.	The Orthodox Re-action in America ...	6
7.	1906	7
8.	Onward, Christian Soldiers. Music ...	8
9.	Memorial to Rev. Richard Lyttle	8
10.	The Theological Outlook for the New Time	9
11.	The Right Way. An Address	11
12.	A Song Sermonette for the New Year. Poem	14
13.	Notes and Jottings	14
14.	Astronomical Notes for January	15
15.	News from the Field	16

A Winter Prayer.

COME through the gloom of clouded skies,
The slow dim rain and fog athwart;
Through east winds keen with wrong and lies,
Come and lift up my hopeless heart.

Come through the sickness and the pain,
The sore unrest that tosses still;
Through aching dark that hides the gain,
Come and arouse my fainting will.

Come through the prate of foolish words,
The science with no God behind;
Through all the pangs of untuned chords,
Speak wisdom to my shaken mind.

Through all the fears that spirits bow—
Of what hath been, or may befall,
Come down and talk with me, for thou
Canst tell me all about them all.

Lord, hear my sad, lone heart entreat—
Thou heart of joy, below, above!
One minute let me kiss thy feet,
And name the names of those I love.

G. M.

More or Less.

WE shall soon be adrift on the current of the new year, and we shall soon be fully occupied with the work of the new year. To those whose spirits depend upon the weather, and whose philosophy matches the mood of the hour, the dark days of the early winter bring gloomy thoughts. Measuring life and its opportunities by the record of the passing year, each new calendar to them suggests doleful reflections about the coming of old age and the brevity of life. Because two or three thousand years ago somebody said that the natural span of life was then about seventy years, we now, when it is not the natural measure of life, continue to anticipate labour and sorrow for the years that come after. Through gloomy reflections and untimely anticipations, life for many loses its elasticty. But serene and hopeful souls, who have lived wisely, have kept their bodies in good condition, and have given their nerves and muscles due discipline and exercise, do not let short days, dark nights, stormy seasons, or the

figures in the calendar, suggest the premises from which they draw their arguments concerning the meaning and value of life.

Whoever has anything worth calling faith in a spiritual world (of which our spiritual life here is a part), a world higher, wider, more beautiful, and more full of opportunity than anything we have yet discovered, should learn to take life, as it passes, at its full value. No one can do that who forebodes evil to come, or who dreads what the future may bring. If one is well occupied, and compassed about by happy memories and pleasant thoughts, he may become almost unconscious of discomfort, and may be happy under circumstances which will make his next neighbour acutely miserable. In one of the December days, when smoke and mist, chilling winds and melting snow, made the outer world dark and dreary to one who gave his mind to it, a man took his way careless of the weather, and intent only upon thoughts which had come to him out of a great book filled with the spirit of life. Coming into a crowded station, it gave him a shock of surprise to hear one man say to another, "What a horrible day this is!" He was living in the inner world, had not thought of the weather, and was content. The other man was living in the outer world, and was miserable.

There are optimists who are fools. They live in a fool's paradise, and have neither vigour to resist that which is evil nor wisdom to build up that which is good. They wait for things to turn up. They say everything will come out right in the end. Their philosophy leads to the absurd conclusion that everything that is is right, and nothing that ever was was wrong. There are pessimists, also, that are fools. The Psalmist did not declare that every man who says there is no God is a fool: he said, "Every fool says there is no God." All pessimists are not fools; but there are fools who are pessimists, and they, being men of small information and short memories, leave out of the account all the evils of the past which are decreasing, and regard only that which they see around them. The evil near at hand is magnified many times by the news-gathering agencies, which act like mirrors set on every side of us, reflecting and repeating the wrong doing of the world in endless perspective, until it seems overwhelming. By the modern method of reporting the life of the world, this process of magnifying and duplicating over and over again affects the pessimist unduly, because the evil being more rare than the good, and the evil event being more dramatic than the common blessings of life, it is the evil of the world that gets into the focus of the news-gathering machine which exaggerates and distributes the tidings of the little events that disturb the life of the world. The pessimist who is a fool, like his brother the optimist of the same calibre, does little good in the world. Because he has no hope, he has no courage. He has heard that this earth will some time become a burnt out cinder, that the sun will cease to shine, and in our solar system there will be no more life. Although these possibilities in the running down of our solar machinery are dated many hundreds of thousands and millions of years ahead, it affects his imagination as if it were a crisis due next year; and he feels, thinks, and acts accordingly.

But there are optimists who are not fools, and there are pessimists who are not fools. The optimist sees that, taken altogether, we are getting on to better things, that progress is making, on the whole, the world over. The pessimist who is wise is not blind to this fact; but he sees also that they who remain on a low level when it is possible to ascend to a higher one, that they who act on low ideals when higher ideals are revealed to them, that they who remain in any stage of life when a better one invites them, are in character wicked, are in influence injurious, and in action are always to be restrained, and sometimes to be punished. The wise optimist puts his shoulder to the wheel with a cheery shout, and says, "Come, let's get on to better things." The wise pessimist says in response: "All right! Push along; I will go ahead, and look out for obstacles." There are some rough places that must be made smooth, some rocks to be taken out of the way, some hills to be cut down, and some mountains tunnelled, before the chariot of progress can run smoothly on the Lord's highway.

G. M.

A New Year.

NEW! Ah, how good it were for us if we could become new with the year! If we could leave behind us bad habits, sad memories, ingrained prejudices, our follies and faults and stupidities, and become new men and women! I remember when I was a small boy what a pleasure it was to me to turn over a new page of my copy book—how clean and tidy it looked—perfectly-written text at the top and only quite straight lines drawn below from edge to edge, no sprawling letters, l's of disproportionate height and g's with a bag for tail, no blots or smudges, no mistakes or ill-concealed corrections. This page, I thought, should be unlike all before it, its white surface not soiled by my bad writing.

Alas! It was the same little awkward careless hand which was responsible for the disfigurements of past pages that now began the new one, and soon it showed like the others, my repeated copy shaming the fair example of the head line. What was the use of keeping me day after day to the same irksome task, to repeat the same blunders, make crooked letters and ugly flourishes? Book after book sprawled through and thrown into the waste heap?

Happily I was not left to choose my tasks, nor might I with impunity be slovenly over them. If there was no perceptable improvement from page to page, not always perhaps from book to book, yet there certainly was from year to year, and at last I had so far learned to write that I was allowed to put away copy books for good.

Perseverance generally compulsory, punishment always salutary, fear and some measure of good will on my part accomplished their work, and as a consequence I am able now to write as well as most, better than many of my contemporaries, though that is not to say much.

And so it is in God's great school of life. Here is a New Year. A year guiltless of evil in word or thought or deed, a year without one fault or blunder or mistake. But its first day will soil its cleanness and every day add its quota of sin and folly. To what purpose is it all? End it, O God, or mend it! we cry in the impatience or sorrow of our hearts. Why keep us always "under the law" which we never fulfil, but for the breach of which we ever have to pay the penalties? Always trying, never succeeding; always making resolutions, never keeping them.

Not so. "The Law is our schoolmaster which does bring us to Christ," to the perfect man. But the way is long, or seems to us so, and our progress is very slow, for we are stupid and unwilling scholars the best of us. But progress there is, discernible to the blindest if only we take periods long enough for a fair comparison. The world learns something with the years; and ourselves, unless we are a very bad lot,, learn something too, in proportion of course to our docility and endeavour.

Hail then to the New Year, with its new opportunities, new hopes, unsullied record! Greet its newness with renewed trust in God, renewed resolution to do our best. "Behold, I make all things new," it is the word of God from day to day, from epoch to epoch. Let us too "walk in newness of life" as far as we may, nor be discouraged if the old leaven still haunts the lump of us. Time with effort will purge it out of us, and God has plenty of time, and it is never too late for effort on our part.

We begin all of us together. Let us begin all of us with the same determination to do better, with the same confidence and good cheer that comes of it, that God always does all things well.

CHARLES HARGROVE.

New Year Message to Guild Members.

ASKED by the Editor for a message to the SEED SOWER. I am glad it is for the New Year Number. We are now standing, all of us, like the temple of Janus, facing both ways—to the future, and to the past. And the truest wisdom lies, both for ourselves and our Churches, in understanding their related meaning, and in being faithful to their joint appeal.

Some persons, and some Churches, cling to the past too much—praising alone a time that is gone, and hence taking little part in

to-day's thought and work. Others make the opposite mistake, are impatient with the old, call it dead and done with, and act as though the modern man could ignore everything that has gone before him, regarding the new as the only true. This is the time to rebuke such unwisdom. The past is still living, though the future is calling: the old is not dead, and the present is its child. To neglect either one and the relation between them is to call down confusion upon our thinking and our working. Dr. Martineau said once, "I cannot rest contentedly on the past: I cannot take a step towards the future without its support." There lies the truth: we must take it more to heart. And we must apply it to our Church life. To the younger members of our Churches, and to all our Guilds especially, may I therefore say—

Know the Story of our Free Church History. Do not yield one inch to the scorn of the past, to the lack of the historic sense, to the pride of separateness, which attempt to pass for superior knowledge. Regard instead the religion of England in its various Churches as a fine old oak with many branches, and with deep-set, broad-grasping roots. Each Church may feel that its own branch is of most importance; but each branch should never forget that it also goes back for its life to the root. We must remember that we are truly a branch with a very living history, but also that we belong to the whole tree. Whenever, therefore, we speak of "our" Churches we do not, or should not, mean ours as opposed to all others, or as lopped off from the rest, or as planted apart with a separate life, like a little shrub on its own account; but always as ours amongst others, our share in the common stock, our part in the whole movement, our branch of the old oak. Then we shall escape the secretarian spirit, and know how our churches have come about.

For we ought to know ourselves, and others will surely ask us, "What then exactly is your relation to the rest of the tree? Where about did you first branch off, and why? Why are you called Protestants, why Protestant Dissenters, why Non-Subscribing Protestant Dissenters? Why do you call your churches Free Churches? Free from what? What is your form of Church Government? Why do you worship in many cases in old chapels, which were built by men holding different doctrines? What are Free Trusts? Why have you no collective creed or official statement of belief? In short, what is the meaning of your Church and the reason of your faith?"

The reply lies in one sentence, but includes many others. *The Reason of our faith is the knowledge of our growth.* The answer to all these questions depends, not only on what we believe and think to-day, but on what our fathers and forefathers believed and did yesterday, in other words upon our religious history. So that if we would make history ourselves, as we boast sometimes, we must realise first how history has made us. If we want to take a forward outlook, we must first glance back. Stand near the start of our movement: trace its development from point to point: get into touch with those whom it has inspired to great things. Read the records of its struggles, the archives of its early days, the biographies of its brave confessors, the productions of its scholars, the dreams of its enthusiasts, the deeds of its saints. In other words, feel the force and impetus which have carried this movement onwards, and which, if true to itself, must now be stirring its inner life. Desire with all your heart that this movement may have its helpful part in the larger life of the world of thought, that it may make for that goal, the Church Universal, whose motto shall be, "In things essential unity, in things doubtful liberty, in all things charity." Realise that others, in different ways, but with the same ideal, are also contributing to that Church Universal. Make acquaintance with those who, outside our churches and labels, are accepting and aplying the same liberal principles. For larger meanings, nobler interpretations of divine things, are all around us, some revealed to one mind, some to another's: the seeking and the finding which are always going on are the very breath of our being and the explanation of our position. The old is ever opening into new form and expression: but all the time the permanent things that do not change through the ages are appealing to us with the solemn

voice of the past. We need then all the knowledge, all the helpfulness, all the reverence, which we can gain and others can give: we need to understand and to be understood. Therefore, let the New and the Old go hand in hand, the look forward and the look backward, the promise of the future with the remembrance of the past, the Christ that is to be with the Jesus of Galilee. Know the story of our Free Church history,—*and feel the movement of advancing Free Thought.*

F. K. FREESTON,
President of the Guild Union.

A Year's Windfalls.

On the wind of January
Down flits the snow,
Travelling from the frozen North
As cold as it can blow.
Poor robin redbreast,
Look where he comes;
Let him in to feel your fire,
And toss him of your crumbs.

On the wind in February
Snowflakes float still,
Half-inclined to turn to rain,
Nipping, dripping, chill.
Then the thaws swell the streams,
And swollen rivers swell the sea: —
If the winter ever ends
How pleasant it will be.

In the wind of windy March
The catkins drop down,
Curly, caterpillar-like,
Curious green and brown.
With concourse of nest-building birds
And leaf-buds by the way,
We begin to think of flowers
And life and nuts some day.

With the gusts of April
Rich fruit-tree blossoms fall,
On the hedged-in orchard-green,
From the southern wall.
Apple-trees and pear-trees
Shed petals white or pink,
Plum-trees and peach-trees;
While sharp showers sink and sink.

Little brings the May breeze
Beside pure scent of flowers,
While all things wax and nothing wanes
In lengthening daylight hours.
Across the hyacinth beds
The wind lags warm and sweet,
Across the hawthorn tops,
Across the blades of wheat.

In the wind of sunny June
Thrives the red rose crop,
Every day fresh blossoms blow
While the first leaves drop;
White rose and yellow rose
And moss rose choice to find
And the cottage cabbage-rose
Not one whit behind.

On the blast of scorched July
Drives the pelting hail,
From thunderous lightning-clouds, that blot
Blue heaven grown lurid-pale.
Weedy waves are tossed ashore,
Sea-things strange to sight
Gasp upon the barren shore
And fade away in light.

In the parching August wind,
Corn-fields bow the head,
Sheltered in round valley depths,
On low hills outspread.
Early leaves drop loitering down
Weightless on the breeze,
First fruits of the year's decay
From the withering trees.

In brisk wind of September
The heavy-headed fruits
Shake upon their bending boughs
And drop from the shoots;
Some glow golden in the sun,
Some show green and streaked,
Some set forth a purple bloom,
Some blush rosy-cheeked.

In strong blast of October
At the equinox,
Stirred up in his hollow bed
Broad ocean rocks:
Plunge the ships on his bosom,
Leaps and plunges the foam,—

It's oh! for mothers' sons at sea,
That they were safe at home.

In slack wind of November
The fog forms and shifts;
All the world come out again
When the fog lifts.
Loosened from their sapless twigs
Leaves drop with every gust;
Drifting, rustling, out of sight
In the damp or dust.

Last of all, December,
The year's sands nearly run,
Speeds on the shortest day,
Curtails the sun;
With its bleak raw wind
Lays the last leaves low,
Brings back the nightly frosts,
Brings back the snow.—*Christina Rosetti.*

The Orthodox Re-action in America.

In the December issue of *Unitarian Word and Work*, the official organ of the American Unitarian Association, Dr. S. Eliot writes:—The people who discern the signs of the times cannot have failed to notice a pronounced reaction in theology and ecclesiastical organization which has marked the last few years. It is seen in the stiffening up of orthodoxy all along the lines. The recent action of the Inter-church Conference on Federation excluding the liberal denominations is not an isolated instance. It is one of many evidences of a determination on the part of the orthodox denominations to close up the ranks, rebuild the citadels of dogmatism, and urge the battle against heretics of all kinds. The unanimous decision of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, denying to Prof. H. G. Mitchell the right to teach in the theological school of Boston University, is another incident in the same reaction. Prof. Mitchell had published some of his convictions about the old Testament which are the merest commonplaces of good scholarship, and the Methodist Church has decided that it canot tolerate him any longer as a teacher for its divinity students. Still another incident is the deplorable surrender of freedom made by the undogmatic branches of the Young Women's Christian Association. The Young Men's Christian Association in this country has always been founded on a thoroughly dogmatic basis, excluding from active membership all except members of orthodox churches. The Young Women's Christian Association at first escaped that particular narrowness, and perhaps a third of the associations in this country have been working upon an undogmatic bases. The pressure of orthodox bigotry has become too great for these independent oganisations. At a conference of all the Young Women's Associations it has been decided "in the interests of harmony" that, while the free Associations are not now to be required to accept a dogmatic basis, no new associations are to be formed except upon the basis of orthodox membership. Let Unitarians take notice that hereafter Young Women's Christian Associations stand in the same category as Young Men's Christian Associations, both of them eager to accept Unitarian money, but denying to Unitarians active membership.

The secular papers throughout the country have, with practical unanimity, rebuked the Inter-church Conference on Federation for its narrowness. Some typical comments are here given.

The Boston *Transcript* says, in an editorial: "Such action would have been taken as a matter of course sixty years ago, but this is the twentieth century. Unfortunately, a great many probably very good, but certainly very narrow, people have not yet found it out. They are still living in the past, cherishing prejudices that cramp their vision and fetter their usefulness, and trying to apply their spiritual anachronisms to conditions that they do not fit and never will fit again. . . . . It is not the personality of the men that is involved. It is their message and the ideas which they represent that are denied a hearing. Overtures of peace and good will are rejected. Is it fear or dislike that has been the controlling motive in this extraordinary attitude? But we do not think any of the gentlemen indicated would have hurled any firebrand into the gathering. There is a great and growing body of Christian truth to which Unitarians and Trinitarians may subscribe without venturing upon any divisive

questions of doctrine. . . . Incorrigible dogmatists and spiritual troglodytes may delay the spread of this movement, but they cannot turn it back. Its momentum is too great, and in due time it will advance upon their narrowness, their Pharisaism, and their lack of enlightenment."

The New York *Post* says: "If the Federation can stand it, the Unitarians can. Admission to the Federation is, it seems, very much like admission to a club. Those who are in, want congenial company, and the drawing of the line is merely a question of taste. The ruling of action in the Federation has a taste for old-line evangelicals. The Unitarians are not old-line evangelicals, and they cannot play in the Federation's backyard. The Federation makes faces at them over the fence, and says they are not real Christians. This, of course, is a matter of definitions. John D. Rockefeller, according to certain devout evangelicals, is one of the best living Christians. The late Jay Gould and Senator Matthew Stanley Quay, according to high evangelical authority, held with uncommon tenacity to the faith once delivered. These orthodox worthies would naturally be more congenial company for all rightminded evangelicals than the Unitarian delegates."

The Boston *Post* says: "Here, where these men are neighbours, known as conspicuous representatives of Christian citizenship, their exclusion seems incredible. It is explained, however, that the action of the Executive Committee is based upon the fact that these distinguished gentlemen and Christians are representatives of the Unitarian belief, whereas the National Federation is orthodox.

"But what is Christianity as differentiated from creed? In the invitations sent out for the Conference of the National Federation of Churches it is declared that the great Christian bodies in our country should stand together and give impulse to all great movements which make for righteousness. . . . Is there a close corporation in Christian morality?"

The Portland *Oregonian* says: "The Committee of the Federation of Churches have travelled far from the path of great thinkers of the Bible to find their definition of a Christian. They have travelled equally far from common sense. The modern world looks with weary contempt upon these relics of theological hatred among men who profess to be working for the advancement of peace on earth and good will to men.

"If the influence of the Church is waning, as many say it is, the reason will be found in the importance which church leaders attach so persistently to wordy controversies and worn-out dogmatic platitudes. The world will distrust the sincerity of purpose of any federation of churches which cannot admit to membership such a man as Edward Everett Hale."

1906.

A Happy New Year to the Seed Sower and its readers. The past year has brought its discouragements and its inspirations to all workers in the cause of Liberal Religion. As we stand on the threshold of the New Year, let us look principally at the inspirations. The seeing eye will find them in abundance, both in the individual congregations and in our movement as a whole.

The prevailing note of the International Council was one of buoyant optimism. Our deepest need just now, it seems to me, is the need of more optimism—not the optimism that results in folded hands and soothing lethargy, but the optimism that kindles energy and gives purpose to effort.

I am always struck by the extremes in the matter of devotion which are to be found within the confines of our liberal Faith. On the one side we see a loyalty and self-sacrifice, such as can nowhere be surpassed. On the other an inertia and laxity which seems bred in the very bone.

Among New Year resolves ought we not to find a foremost place for this—the resolve to show greater faithfulness and more enthusiastic devotion to the Faith which we have called ours. With increase of fidelity and the will to work and sacrifice all things become possible. Without it we can become nothing and accomplish nothing.

J. Worsley Austin.

Onward, Christian Soldiers.

(A New Setting, by W. F. Newey.)

Onward, Christian sol - diers, Marching as to war, With the Cross of Je - sus Go - ing on be - fore.
Christ the Roy - al Mas - ter Leads a - gainst the foe; Forward in - to bat - tle, See, His ban - ners go!
poco rit.
On - ward, Christian Sol - diers, Marching as to war, With the Cross of Je - sus Go - ing on be - fore.
Ory.

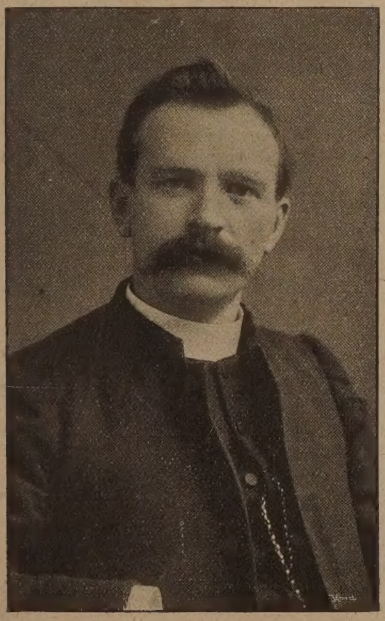
Memorial to Rev. Richard Lyttle.

In the sudden and untimely death of Mr. Lyttle we lose one of our most devoted ministers, and one of the best of friends. To know Mr. Lyttle was to love him. The wish to commemorate his services and to perpetuate his name and memory is shared we are sure by many beside the members of his own congregation. With this object the following letter has been sent to a wide circle of friends, and we have pleasure in bringing it before the readers of the Seed Sower—

"The Congregation at Moneyrea, co. Down, Ireland, have decided to erect a Memorial to their late Pastor, the Rev. Richard Lyttle.

In deciding upon the form of the Memorial, they have had regard to the work Mr. Lyttle was doing, and they are proposing to perpetuate his memory by improving the facilities for carrying on that work. Mr. Lyttle was deeply interested in the work of both Day and Sunday Schools, the Temperance Guild, and other agencies using the Schools. Nothing would have been dearer to his heart than to have erected new Schools to take the place of the present somewhat

dilapidated and inconvenient building. His energies, however, were fully occupied in the complete restoration of the Meeting House and Manse, a work he happily achieved before his untimely end. Had he survived, he would undoubtedly have undertaken the erection of new Schools as his next effort. Now the task devolves upon his sorrowing congregation as a sacred legacy from their beloved pastor, and it has been decided to call the



new buildings "The Lyttle Memorial Schools." The estimated cost will be £1,250.

It is believed that many others would like to associate themselves with the Moneyrea Congregation in doing honour to the memory of their late pastor. The sympathies and services of Mr. Lyttle extended far beyond the limits of his parish at Moneyrea. The pamphlet just published bears testimony to his services in the cause of Temperance and social reform. In England, Mr. Lyttle was well known as a speaker at the Triennial Conference, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and as a preacher in many of our pulpits. Everywhere he was esteemed and loved as a man of broad and generous sympathies, of high character and marked gentle courtesy of bearing. His sudden and early death has touched the hearts of all who knew him, and it is believed that a common desire will be felt by all to perpetuate his memory as that of a worthy example for our young ministers and laymen to emulate.

We, the undersigned—friends and classmates of Mr. Lyttle—have been asked to act as a small Committee in England, in co-operation with our Irish friends, and we now earnestly beg to solicit your help in perpetuating the memory and carrying on the work of one whom we must always hold in the dearest regard.

We are, yours sincerely,

W. E. Atack, Bradford, Manchester; William Holmshaw, Blackley, Manchester; John Ellis, Minister, Yorkshire Union; George A. Payne, Knutsford; Charles Roper, Kilburn, London; J. H. Weatherall, Bank Street, Bolton; W. C. Hall, Small Heath, Birmingham; J. A. Pearson, Oldham; Charles Peach, Upper Brook Street, Manchester; Thomas P. Spedding, Rochdale.

Donations and correspondence should be sent to—

Rev. Chas Peach, 68, Richmond Grove, Manchester.

Rev. Thos. P. Spedding, 91, Tweedale Street, Rochdale.

The Theological Outlook for the New Time.

There is no doubt in my mind that religious changes are coming over the world with greater rapidity than ever. Hopes which Liberal Christians have long entertained, often with some impatience at the long delay in their fulfilment, are now being realised on a scale even larger than any dared to expect. We spoke of the last century as a century of change; but in my judgment its work was little more than preparation for what is soon to come, for what is coming even

now. The movement is world-wide in its origin and world-wide in its operation. There is no sect or church, nor any group of such, which can cry, "this is our doing." A new breath of the spirit is animating the human heart all over the world, and none can tell whence it came nor whither it goeth. But its fruit, we believe, must be a higher morality and a purer religion: we believe it, not because we can forecast the future, but because it always is so when God visits the earth.

The causes of this movement are partly internal and partly external. The process of disintegration in the fabric of mediæval theology has now gone so far that large masses of masonry are continually falling. In no quarter of the Christian world is this process going on more rapidly than in the Roman Catholic Church. It would not surprise the present writer if one of the most notable religious reforms of modern times were to spring—as indeed it sprang in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—from Catholicism itself. Nor is it unlikely that in the Eastern Church great changes are impending. That she has lost much of her authority and prestige can hardly be doubted. To those who are accustomed to thinking that theological advance must always be preceded by a rigorous course of the Higher Criticism, it may appear incredible that the most ignorant and priest-ridden peasantry of Europe should be among the first to accept the new light: but those who have read their histories will be prepared for this, and for yet stranger things.

But the external causes are the more important. The writer has elsewhere expressed an opinion that the rise of Japan, which appears to him rather as a moral than a political phenomenon, has administered the severest blow to the prejudices and self-complacency of Christendom, of which history bears record. Directly it would seem not to affect the dogmas of Christendom: but indirectly it affects them in the most vital manner by diverting attention from the theological to the moral question. Men are so constituted that moral issues are always recognized as supreme the moment the mind is turned upon them; and there is no more effectual way of accomplishing a theological reformation than by compelling attention to some greater moral issue lying behind theological belief. Martineau has pointed out that a certain class of controversies are never settled by argument: they are settled, however, by a much more effectual means—*forgetfulness*. And this is precisely how the rise of Japan is helping us to settle our religious controversies to-day: she is helping us to forget them by directing our atention to the greatness of the moral backbone of the nation. The selfish rich, the vast multitudes of moderately well-to-do persons who conceive nothing higher than their own comfort, the young men of whom great numbers recognize no obligations in life beyond those they owe to sport, the idle, the dissolute, the self-satisfied in all classes of the community—these have received a stunning rebuke from the Far East. The effect is to bring the moral issue into prominence, and to leave mere theological difference unnoticed. This must needs work for that end which all liberal men desire. It will cause us to begin the *religious* reformation at the right point, viz., by *moral* reformation. It will compel us to seek a higher working standard for our daily lives. From this a purer religion will follow.

In this great movement, which has already begun, who are worthy to have part? Those who think of their own honour and glory, those who are anxious that posterity should give the credit of these things *to them*, will, I am convinced, be left behind by this movement, like so much *débris* cast aside by the current, and in the long run they will be utterly forgotten. Only such as are willing to look beyond themselves and their own party, and genuinely concern themselves in the human aspect of this mighty movement will be found in a real sense to have contributed anything whatever to its results. The fact is we are all in the condition of being carried along by the current, and it is therefore idle for any of us to claim that we initiate it. But as Dr. Arnold says, "What matters it who does God's work, so long as God's work be done?" Indeed, when these great changes are completed they are always found to be "not of man, but of God," unexpected in their origin, unexpected in the scope of their operation, and beneficient in forms of which not even the wisest had dreamed.

L. P. Jacks.

The Right Way.

AN ADDRESS TO CHILDREN.

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord pondereth the hearts."—*Proverbs xxi., 2.*

There is a right way and a wrong way of doing everything. There is a right way and a wrong way to get to every place. Every girl who has begun to learn to play on the piano has learnt that there is a right and a wrong way of fingering a musical passage, and perhaps has found out also that the wrong way is always the more difficult way, and that if she get into the wrong way of fingering, she will never be able to play so well as those who only use the right way. Every boy knows that there is a right way and a wrong way of spinning a top, or trundling a hoop, or mounting a pony, or doing a sum, or holding a pen, or spending a shilling, or using a half holiday, or treating a schoolfellow.

And yet the first sentence I spoke to you is not quite true. There are some things which you can't do in two ways, but only in one. There is not a right way *and* a wrong way of doing certain things, and things which a good many people do, and do very often. I wonder if you can think what these things are and which you can only do in one way—that is, either in a right way or a wrong way, but not in both a right and a wrong way.

I will tell you—they are the wrong things: the things that nobody ought to do; the bad, the wicked, the naughty, the ugly, the unmanly and unwomanly things:—there is only one way of doing these things, and that is the wrong way. You can't do a wrong thing in a right way. There is no right way about it. You can't make wrong right, nor do wrong rightly. It is all wrong, and nothing but wrong, however you do it: wrong from top to bottom, wrong inside and outside, wrong from beginning to end, wrong all over:—right will have nothing to do with it. Can you tell a lie in a right way? Can you go into a fit of passion in a right way? Can you sulk in a right way? Can you spitefully break your playmate's playthings in a right way? Can you deceive your father or mother in a right way? Can you play truant in a right way? Can you swear or steal or be filthy in a right way? No! it is impossible. You can only do bad things in one way, and that is a wrong one.

I wonder how you will be disposed to answer another question which I should like to ask you,—Can you do right things in a wrong way? For instance, can you tell the truth in a wrong way? I hear one of you say, No! But I must tell you that you can. A mother asked her little girl one day, "Mary, who broke my beautiful porcelain vase?" And Mary knew, and was afraid: and for a moment her little heart was just ready to say, "Johnny did it,"—but she knew he hadn't. And then she thought she would say,—"the kitten did it,"—but she knew better. And then she thought she would say she did not know, but she knew she did, and she felt that her cheeks were very red and hot, and that Mamma was reading her thoughts, and so she began to cry; and when she was asked, "Did you do it, Mary?" she was obliged to whisper and sob it out—Yes! She told the truth, but was that the right way of telling it? No, she should have said at once—I did it. Straight out,—I did it. She only told the truth because she must, and not because she would, and so she did it in the wrong way.

Can you give your brother what he wants, and what is his own in the wrong way? Yes! One day as I was at work in my garden, I heard two boys at play in a neighbouring garden, and the elder had taken something that belonged to the younger of them. Upon this the younger of them complained,—not in the sweetest of tones nor the most amiable of tempers, to be sure, but still not unreasonably. And his brother replied—"There, take your thing, then!" and flung it at him! He did the right thing you see, but did it in the wrong way. Gave him what he wanted, but gave it him sullenly, and like a great surly tyrant rather than as a loving friend. How much nobler and more beautiful it would have been to have said, "I beg your pardon, I did not know you wanted it; here it is again." Then he would have been a gentleman, and what is better, a right good, true, manly boy.

So you see there are two ways of doing right things—a right way and a wrong way; but only one way of doing wrong things—they can only be done the wrong way.

But you will remember that I said that there were two ways of getting to every place—a right and a wrong way. Suppose now that your little brother had fallen down stairs and hurt himself seriously, and there was nobody at home to go for the doctor but you, and so you were sent, and told to run asfast as you could to fetch him. Well, just as you get outside you think that you have your penny to spend, and it is only a little way round to the sweet shop, you will just go round that way; and you leave your little brother suffering and moaning there whilst you go to buy sweets. Is that the right way? No, no! Run, run and make the ground fly behind you, that as soon as may be he may be out of his pain.

But sometimes the right way to a place is not that which seems to you the shortest. If you had ever been up a mountain, you would soon have found that the right way to the top is not straight up, over what looks the easiest of ascent. "What," you say to your guide, "must I go all round there to get to that point? It seems to me like going miles round, and there is a straight cut to it, which seems quite easy." Well, try it! You soon find that there is a bog that turns you out of the way, and a little farther a deep ravine that you had not seen, and which it will take you twice as much time and strength to cross, as it would to have gone by the longer track.

So you see, it often happens that older people than you want to be told the way sometimes, and must implicitly rely on the guidance of others if they are not to get wrong.

But I ought to tell you here again, that there is not a right way to every place. The way to a bad place is an evil place, a place where men never ought to go, must always be a wrong way. Is there any right way to a den of lions, or a nest of serpents, or a pit of destruction? Impossible! So, there is no right way to a den of thieves, or a nets of gamblers, or a haunt of drunkards, or the home of the wicked, or the sea of the scornful. That is why the great and good book says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." (Psalm i. 1.) And again, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." (Proverbs i., 10.) And again, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." (Proverbs iv. 14, 15.)

Remember this, then, as long as you live, that there is no right way to a wrong place.

Now then, I want to lead you on to a somewhat larger thought about this same thing. You are at this moment, even whilst you are sitting still there in your seats, travellers on a very long, and, as it will very soon seem to you, a very rapid journey. Do you find it difficult to understand what I mean when I say that you can be travelling on a journey when you are only conscious of sitting still? Why, those of you who know a little about the world you live on know that it is every moment spinning round on its own axis at the rate of about one thousand miles an hour: and yet we don't feel it. We go along with it as comfortably as if it were perfectly still. We only know it because we leave the sun behind us, and go past the region where the stars are, and then come round to the sun again. So I tell you that whilst you are sitting here, and when you are at play to-morrow morning, and when you are at school this week, and all your life long you are on a journey. You are getting further along a path which will some day have an end, and according to the kind of place you get to at the end will you be happy or miserable for ever. Will you think of that now? Will you let me tell you again? Your are on a journey, and you must get somewhere at the end of it. And you are not sure to get where you would wish to be for ever; but may get to a place where you would not wish to be for a day, much less for ever, and ever, and ever. And there is only one right way for this journey of life. I wonder if you are in it now, or if I can help you to get into it, and to want to walk in it all your life.

But now I want you in your mind to take a journey with me from beginning to end. We will start now,—say fifty of us, boys and girls, and I along with you. Let us start early in the morning with our faces to the rising sun: when the lark is singing his morning hymn, and the flowers are saying their fragrant prayers. Our path is through fields that God has carpeted for us with green and gold, and crimson, and purple, and every royal and pleasant hue. Trees overhead are throwing their cool shade upon our path. A still and glassy lake of blue is lying on our right hand, and grand mountains with silver peaks of everlasting snow, are climbing up to heaven on our left. What is that I hear one of you saying there? "I wish we wer'nt going this way; I'm sure the other is the pleasanter road." My boy, this is the right way. I want to take you up by yon glittering peak, far up the mountain side, just below the snow that the sun is now tinting with the colour of the rose. There's a palace there if we can all reach it safely, where you will be in a region of everlasting life. Rich, and happy, and safe for ever, and from which you will be able to journey again into a land a thousand times more glorious than this. But we must all keep together, for there is only one path that leads to it, and it is very easy to miss the way. But now we have come to a gate, where we must begin to climb, and the path is narrower and more stony. Up, up, up, we go, now and then turning to look back at the plain we have left, and the path we have trod. And now one of you says, What a beautiful garden is there, we must have pasesd it not long ago, I didn't see it then." Ah, my child, we passed through it, but you were so busy after the butterflies, that you missed the golden fruit. But up and on again, now for a bit of level green where you can run and not set your heart a beating, and then up again through a fine forest where the hot sun is forbidden to come, and the winds making a harp of every tree top. And now out on to the open hill again, to the edge of a long, long stretch of moorland without a tree or a shrub, nothing but rushes and moss, and no discernible track. We will sit down and rest, and look about us awhile. Far ahead, where the hill rises again, a mile or more away, we see a little silver line, zigzagging up a boss of the mountain, just a little away from yon deep, frowning, dark, frightful precipice of rocks: there lies our path, my children, and we must reach it as best we may. An hour has passed, and some of us have slept, but on again now. Ah! but where is our party? Five are not here. See, there they go: right for the precipice. They wanted to be by themselves. They know where the palace is; they can find their own way, they said. In vain we call them back, they cannot or will not hear. They are out of sight now. They will stumble in the night, and be dashed to death among the rocks. Ah foolish, foolish boys! And now we are on the open moor with one eye on the distant path. Tis all we have to guide us. "See here," says one of you, "here is a path, only it goes to the left, and seems to take us to younder hill instead of that on the right: must not this be the way?" Ah, my

child! don't be deceived. 'Tis only a sheep-track, perhaps, or else it is a way that they have made who did not like the look of yon steep, and they have either had to come back, or they have never got to the Palace of the hills. I see many of you are looking with longing eyes at that track, and your little hearts are fainting at the thought of the steep and the precipice. But no! yonder lies the right way, and there is only one. We must make for that. Courage then and on. Away we go, and sing as we cross the pathless moor, making our own merriment, when there is nothing about us to make us merry, as wise people always do. But what means this? More missing! Have they lagged behind? See, there they are, the foolish girls, they have turned back after the beaten track, and fallen in with company, and are dancing along the broad smooth path—but it is the wrong way. They must turn back or they will never reach the Palace of the hills. And now up the steep again. We must make haste for the sun is sinking in the west. We must not be overtaken in the darkness here, for we are in danger-land. Fast, fast sinks the sun into yon hill: fast, fast beat our hearts. See the last little bit of his disc, and now all is shade and gloom. But brave hearts and a little while will bring us rest. The darkness is on us ere we have reached our home, but see there is the light in the window; take hold of hands and keep close and we are soon there. But what again! Five more are missing Alas! they got weary half way up the hill, and thought of the easy track and turned back—to sleep on the hill side to-night, and haste after their companions to-morrow. We shall never see them again. If they fall not over the rocks, there are wolves that prowl in the night, and we shall never see them again.

But now up again with the sun, and on our way again. How strong we are for our sleep. Tired? No—ready for twice as much to-day, and a glorious world is spreading round us every step we climb. How pure the air is, how fresh the wind, how sweet the flowers, what a joy is life in the upper heights; O! to be at the Palace of the hills. But what to do now. Our path has brought us to a deep and rocky gorge, across a foaming torrent with only a little narrow ledge by which to cross. But see, there on the other side, amid the rocks, our path is winding, this is the right way we must go. "And have we got to get up there again?" you say. "Oh, what a misery to have to go all this way down and up again, and it is so gloomy; and how shall we cross the stream?" It is the right way, my children, we must keep it or be lost. And so with many a slip, and many a fall, and many a bruise, and many a cry, and many a tear, and many a fear, we get to the foaming stream. Ah see! an iron rail from rock to rock, we did not perceive before. Courage, my braves—hand in hand again, and hold fast to the rail and we are safe across. And then we climb again another and another day. With faint heart and giddy head sometimes, but still on, till suddenly at a sharp turn in the hill, just as the sun is crimsoning the snow, and the valleys are curtained in the shade, and the earth mists are rising below and brooding over the parched world, an atmosphere of vital dew, there bursts upon us the Palace of the hills, its crystal battlements and pinnacles all glorious with gold, its ample halls all full of gorgeous melody. We wash us from our dust in waters that are sparkling with life, and fill us with new force. We sit down to our first banquet of food, that is newness of life. We hear our own old songs again but sung so rapturously that we scarce know them for our own. The dangers and the difficulties and the perplexities are finished. The right way has brought us to the Palace of the hills.

Would you know the meaning of all this, my children. It is the journey of life. The Palace of the hills is heaven. You are the travellers. There is only one right way.

Oh, how shall you find it? How shall you get a brave enough heart? How dare the precipice and gloomy pass?

Would you like a guide? One who knows every step of the way. One who never tires. One who can carry you when you are faint. One whose strong arms can keep you from falling. One whose love can cheer you all the way, and make you sing in the dark. One who can steady you over the foaming torrent, and nerve you for the giddy height.

You can have one. He is waiting for you to ask Him. He will love to guide you. He will never leave you if you do not force Him away, or go into the wrong road. You know who it is. It is your Heavenly Father. You have only to go to Him and ask Him never so simply, as you would ask your father to give you something he had promised you, and he will begin to guide you to-day. I know that you will not be able to see Him, nor to feel the touch of His loving hand, nor hear His gentle voice, but He will guide you in the right way of life every day as certainly as if you could see Him, and hear Him, and take hold of His hand. I dare say you have seen a magnet; perhaps you have had a little toy that is called "the magic fishes"—two or three little metal fishes which you put into a basin of water, which you can make to swim any way you like by moving a magnet over them, or outside the basin. And when you have asked how it is that the fishes follow the magnet you have been told that the magnet attracts the metal of which the fishes are made. Well, now, if the magnet were as big as a mountain, and the fish as big as a whale, the mountain would attract the fish even if it were hundreds of miles away. This may help you to understand how God can guide you though you never see nor hear Him. He can influence you from heaven so that you shall always choose the right way, and never make a fatal mistake. Are you saying to yourself—"But heaven is a long way off!"

Why, you know the sun is ninety millions of miles away from the world, and yet the sun not only holds the world at that exact distance from him, like a great golden magnet, but also takes it along with him wherever he goes. Can you not easily believe then that He who made the sun and the world can hold you to Himself, and cause you to walk always in the right way.

But why does He not then guide everybody in the right way? Ah! my dear ones, God is too loving to drag us along if we don't want to go. He wants us to be happy, and He knows we should not be happy if He were to force us into the way that we do not like. And so it is only those who go to Him, and who love Him, and who believe what is told them about Him by those who know Him, and are ready to be led by Him, that are guided by Him to the Palace of the hills.

Is your heart saying—"But am I sure He will hear me if I pray to Him?" Did you ever wake in the night out of a frightful dream, and call out for your father and mother, and find them instantly awake and at your bedside to comfort you: and are you sure that if the dream were to come again, they would hear you and come again? So God will come at your call, and be instantly at your side; for He is unspeakably more loving than anybody you ever knew, and infinitely more able to do for you all that you need. But remember you can never get there without Him, and there is only one right way.

G. C.

A Song Sermonette for the New Year.

Welcome to the New-born Year,
Child of all the ages!
Dower'd with light and truth more clear
Than ever knew the sages;
Of Time's enlarged estate thou art the heir,
Its wealth and tasks are now thy charge and care.

Vistas of the bygone days
Never were so vast;
Time ne'er trod such wondrous ways
In the vanished past;
Nor hid so many germs of everything
That's fair and good for future flowering.

Christ had ne'er so large a part
On the earth as now;
Never beat the human heart
With so high a vow;
Nor ever thrilled and throbbed the human brain
With thoughts more wide and deep, and not in vain

What speaketh the New Year
Now as it meets us,—
Forward looking, without fear,
Now as it greets us?

"To you, O sons of men, to you I call!
Think clear, feel deep, work well, ere evening fall."

Courage to endure ye need,
The soul's persistence;
Courage for the daring deed,
And wrong's resistance.
Dear hearts! the victory may ye bravely win
In strife with evil powers, without, within.

Ye are sentinels on guard!
Stand then at your post!
Guard your thoughts, for thoughts are heard
By the Heavenly Host.
From things impure the inner temple keep,
Nor fail as men-at-arms o'erta'en by sleep.

Prompt to seize the passing chance—
Lamp never dark'ning!
Prompt for Truth's hard-won advance—
Ear ever heark'ning!
Instant to minister, and quick to cheer
Thy brother man through all the coming year.

Rise then with the coming year,
Give thy best full scope;
What to heaven is most dear
Be thy dearest hope:—
So when the year's departing bell shall toll,
Thy guerdon be a loftier, larger soul.—J.W.

Notes and Jottings.

As I write these notes Christmas is but a week ahead; ere they appear it will have passed suddenly away. The approach of this "frosty but kindly" old Festival works a marvellous change in the moods of men. They begin the month of December as usual—hard, pushing, competitive. If Christmas is then thought of at all it is secretly to resent it as a pending dislocation of the serious business of life in the interests of pudding and sentiment. But as the days pass their hearts are gradually and subtly softened.

One dismal day you pass a shop window sparkling with artificial frost and white with cotton wool. Other shop windows follow suit, and the streets are swiftly transformed. The children come home each day more noisy and voluble; full of excited talk of toys and strange theological speculations as to relation of Santa Claus to the Cosmos. A little trembling glow of good-humour stirs in the

hearts of their parents, deepens into a beneficient affection, and becomes at last a pervading enthusiasm of good-will.

The men and women you pass in the street begin to look kindlier, and have a touch of radiance in the eye and a faint suggestion of a smile about the mouth, as if some good fortune had befallen them. The censorious lose their asperity, and find something to praise, even in the saints. The irritable, no longer perpetually cross and snappish, are known to lapse into geniality. The morose, in a lucid interval, solemnly assure the postman that it is a beautiful day, and that he must be getting busy; and a real lady startles everyone in the tramcar by saying "thank you" to the astonished workman who has given up his seat to her. There is no accounting for folk, for like a man in love, they have become quite irresistibly and irresponsibly human.

Then comes the spirit in flood, bearing gifts and greetings. Family life becomes more blessedly divine, friendships more tender and deep, acquaintanceships ripen into fellowship, enmity melts and disappears. Love, the Conqueror, has won a world-wide victory, sent our thoughts throbbing to the Colonies and distant countries, and brought them back again laden with sweetest memories. It has re-united families, revived old kinships, renewed ancient associations, broken down barriers, healed breaches, and in mutual forgiveness reconciled enemies.

This is the miracle of Christmas, being in fact a momentary repetition of the miracle of Christianity. It would help us to grasp the significance of our Faith if only we could think of it as the gladness and goodwill of Christmas, indefinitely intensified and purified. It came to the decrepit old world breathing a cool sweet fragrance through all its foulness, and giving to what was noble in it a new touch of sanctity and holiness. In a word it moralised its gladness and gladdened its morals. And the task of the Christian is to make the advent of this spirit not the mere gift of a season, but the unending benediction of time.

Christmas is gone: the New Year has come, and the trumpets are sounding for battle. It is probable that the General Election will begin a new epoch in English History. For nearly a quarter of a century the government of this country has been in the hands of the Conservative Party.

Distracted by internal dissensions it has at last resigned office. With a change of Government we shall see a change of public temper. The Education and Licensing Acts will certainly be overhauled, and the whole subject of Social Reform will again come vividly to the front. The figure of Mr. John Burns in the Cabinet is a symbol of a change in British politics more significant than that effected by the Reform Acts.

J. M. H. T.

Astronomical Notes for Jan.

The heavens are now in their full winter glory. It is a fortunate circumstance for those who live in our longitude that most of the brightest stars and constellations are visible in the winter, when the nights are darkest. If anyone will go out about ten o'clock on a clear night towards the end of January, he will see a magnificent sight. A portion of the sky, of an oval shape, stretching from the zenith to within a short distance of the southern horizon, contains half of the first magnitude stars which are visible in our latitude, *i.e.*, seven out of fourteen, their names being Sirius, Capella, Rigel, Procyon, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran, and Pollux. Almost exactly overhead is Capella, the brightest star but one in the northern hemisphere, which is visible all the year round. At the lower extremity of the oval is Sirius, the most brilliant of all the fixed stars. Above Sirius is the brightest of the constellations, Orion, with Betelgeuse on his right shoulder, Rigel on his left leg, and the three stars of the belt between. Procyon, which makes an equilateral triange with Sirius and Betelgeuse, is at the extreme left of the oval. The Twins, Castor and Pollux, are above Procyon, and the ruddy Aldebaran is on the right, or western, boundary of the oval. This winter the planet Jupiter is just outside the western boundary, near to Aldebaran, but next winter he will be within the oval, in the constellation Gemini. Mars and Saturn continue visible in the south-west early in the evening.

News from the Field.

To condense the activities of even a little body of churches like ours for a month, into a few brief paragraphs, of necessity takes a good deal of the life out of the narration, and leaves many things unrecorded that are worth a place in our chronicle. But we cannot overcome the difficulties of time and space.

Again we meet with resignations, appointments, farewells, and welcomes. This will ever be. The *Rev. R. D. Davies* resigns *Pentre* and *Clydach Vale* at the end of the year, and *Rev. A. Amey*, at the same period, leaves *Colyton*. Friends at *Moss Side, Manchester*, at *Mansfield*, and at *Dukinfield*, have said gracious words of farewell to honest and able workers like *Rev. C. Roper, Rev. E. I. Fripp*, and *Rev. H. Tayler*, and have accompanied kindly words with generous presentations, and in other ways marked appreciation of the services of valued leaders and teachers.

Rev. C. Roper has been finely welcomed to his new duties at *Kilburn*, the *Rev. R. H. Greaves* has had a cordial send-off in his arduous task at *York*, where great discretion is needed as well as boldness, and *Mrs. Broardick* has undertaken the Mission work at Lewins Mead, *Mr. Charles E. Read* goes to *Ringwood*, and *Rev. J. Ruddle* has accepted the call to *Stannington*.

We notice Bazaars at *Liscard*, where £400 was sought, and over £600 obtained, at *Walmsley* where £47 10s. 0d. was raised, and at *Hinckley*, where the sum reached was £95 0s. 0d. Other similar efforts were made in various places.

Among promising signs of activity may be noted *Rev. Stopford Brooke's* services at *Hampstead;* the beginning of a renewed effort to establish a congregation at *Blackburn;* the going of *Dr. Tudor Jones* from *Swansea* to *Wellington, New Zealand*, under the auspices of the *B. and F. Unitarian Association*, the enlargement of the premises of the *Mansford Street Mission*, the stone-laying of a new Mission Church at *Attercliffe, Sheffield*, and the opening of new Sunday School buildings at *Preston*, the earnest effort worthily to celebrate the Centenary of the *Lye Church*, by making important alterations and improvements. The *Rev. Joseph Wood* is to preach on Friday, January 5th, 1906, where a strenuous effort will be made to raise the needful funds.

We rejoice in these signs of activity and proofs of success, and congratulate all concerned.

Financial demands are ever being made and ever responded to. The records of the progress made in the following Funds tell their own encouraging story. The *College Fund* and the *Domestic Mission* Fund in *Manchester*, the *Martineau Memorial* at *Norwich*, and the *Congregational Collections* for *the B. and F. Unitarian Association.* Every good cause is supported, and generous helpers are found where there is evidence of solidly good work.

An appeal is now being made for School-buildings at *Moneyrea*, in memory of the good work of the devoted Pastor, the late *Rev. R. Lyttle*, whose name is held in reverence and honour, and we do not doubt that it will be generously responded to.

While all these activities are going on it seems to be a folly to raise questions about *names*. Our congregations are *free*, by whatever name they are called, and if we are spoken of as *Unitarians* in our individual capacity, it is known everywhere that we will not let our *Church* be made sectarian, nor its basis of union narrowed down by any creed. We shall probably not find, though we search for ever, any name on which we could agree, but neither shall we allow any name to limit our boundless catholicity.

A notable manifesto has been issued and signed by upwards of a hundred of our influential Ministers and Laymen on behalf of social reform, and this gives proof that we are not going to be idle in the new and better days which are dawning, when problems dealing with the life and well-being of the people will be raised out of party politics, and lifted into the forefront of our living activities.

The *Rev. J. E. Carpenter* continues his good work of lecturing on great theological subjects at many places, and notably at *Birmingham*, where he has had audiences large and influential representing much of the best life of the city.

We may congratulate *Mr. Carpenter*, and certainly we may congratulate our College in *Oxford*, on his appointment as Principal in succession to *Dr. Drummond*. He follows good and great men, but the standard of scholarship and nobleness will not be lowered in his hands.

The old Chapel, in *Cross Street, Manchester*, has been stirred into new life, by the opening of its doors to prominent teachers of Socialism, who have had a free field and large audiences to listen to their expositions. These may react upon the old place, and bring back something of its former life and leadership.

Many other matters crowd upon us, but we have neither the time nor space to dwell upon them. The comfort is that no good word or work is lost. The scribe may not tell its story, but the Eternal registers all in His book of remembrance.

But we must lay our tribute of honour and respect on the graves of departed ones, who have passed away at the closing of the year. One of the most venerable of our Ministers, the *Rev. W. Whitelegge*, of *Cork*, at a patriarchal age has passed away, and a goodly group of honoured men and women have gone along with him into the Supreme presence. Among these we may mention, *Mrs. Kelly* of *Dunmurry*, *Mrs. Wells* of *Altrincham*, *Mrs. Grovenor Talbot of Leeds*; *Mr. David Gray, and Mr. Alexr. McLaren* of *Glasgow*, *Mr. James Booth* of Bath, *Mr. John D. Thomas* of *Liverpool*, *Mr. W. H. E. Booth* of *Bristol*, and *Mr. Thomas Jones* of *Newport*. We can thank God and take courage that such as these have lived and died. They glorify our life and exalt our hopes. SCRUTATOR.

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